



CS Bulletin: CFMS 04-1

Date: December 17, 2004

To: Associate Chief Financial Officers, Financial Service Staff, USDA Agencies, Chief Financial Officers

Subject: Corporate Financial Management Systems Schedule Configuration Release Policy and Procedures

PURPOSE

The purpose of this bulletin is to promulgate policy and procedures that must be adhered to in order to ensure that software modifications including enhancements and new software for the Corporate Financial Management Systems (CFMS), which includes the USDA financial and administrative systems, are included in scheduled software releases. This bulletin replaces FFIS Bulletin 01-5 dated August 10, 2001, entitled Policy and Procedure for Requesting Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS) Enhancement and New Processes. Further, this bulletin incorporates all financial and administrative systems under the Associate Chief Financial Officer for Financial Systems (ACFO-FS).

BACKGROUND

Scheduled software releases are being used to implement changes to applications and infrastructure in an orderly and uniform manner. Infrastructure covered includes general and support systems, routers, firewalls and telecommunications. The applications covered by this policy are listed in Attachment 1.

As a management objective, ACFO-FS wants to ensure that all change requests are documented and approved through the Configuration Control Board (CCB) within specified timeframes.

Other management objectives addressed by these enhancement policies and procedures are as follows:

Improve staffing efficiency. ACFO-FS wants to minimize the impact of implementing configuration changes on the agency, developers, and Quality Assurance staff by ensuring that changes are accurately documented, coded, and tested and that the resulting changes perform as intended. Software changes will be packaged into releases to ensure software stability and simplify the process of testing.

Establish documented and repeatable operating procedures. ACFO-FS wants to establish an efficient and repeatable configuration approvals and implementation process.

Provide system quality assurance feedback. ACFO-FS tracks application changes using an automated database. This resource will be used by Quality Assurance (QA) to evaluate the content of future software releases and determine the quality of the releases.

Provide required updates to security assessments. ACFO-FS needs to ensure that security integrity is maintained and any changes are assessed related to system certifications.

Control costs and ensure that the ACFO-FS Systems Development Life Cycle is applied to all configuration changes.

Enforce release management, thus reducing out-of-cycle configuration changes.

PROCEDURES

To manage change request, ACFO-FS has implemented basic procedures for the following:

- Process for requesting changes
- Approving Change Requests

The following subsections describe each of these procedures.

Requesting Changes

The ACFO-FS Application Release Schedule is presented in Attachment 1. All software modifications will be implemented in a scheduled release, unless there is an emergency or mandated change. Infrastructure changes will be handled as they are presented to the CCB.

- Each agency's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) must approve all changes requested to the CFMS managed by ACFO-FS.
- The "Information to be Provided by Originator" section of Form AD1168 (Attachment 2) Configuration Management (CM) Change Request (CR) Form must be completed by the submitting organization.
- Once approved by the organization's CFO, the request must be submitted to the Configuration Management Secretariat for submission to the CFMS CCB. Requests can be sent to CFMSCCB@usda.gov. Requests must include a complete description of the problem, impact statement, proposed solution, cost/benefit analysis, and how the organization intends to fund this work if it is agency specific or no base funding is available and be submitted on Form AD1168 (Attachment 2).
- An e-mail message confirming receipt of the request will be sent to the agency's CFO.

Approving Change Requests

- The CCB will review all requests. The CCB has the responsibility for prioritizing, tracking, scheduling, costing, and controlling all changes to production software.

- The CCB will inform the requester of the results of the review of the CR and provide the release schedule and date when the change will be implemented.

INQUIRIES

If you have any questions you may contact me at (202) 619-7636 or have a member of your staff contact Debbie VanArsdale at (504) 426-5684.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This bulletin is effective immediately.



Wendy E. Snow
Associate Chief Financial Officer for Financial Systems

Attachments

ACFO-FS Software Release Schedule By Month and System		
Month	Number of Systems	System Acronyms
January	3	IPAC * - Intragovernmental Payments and Collections System
		MINC - Miscellaneous Income
		PCMS - Purchase Card Management System
February	4	ACRWS - Automated Cash Reconciliation Worksheet
		EMIS - Equipment Management Information System
		FDW - Financial Data Warehouses
		FSDW - Financial Statements Data Warehouse
March	0	No Releases
April	2	TELE - Telephone Vendors System
		UTVN - Utility Vendors System
May	4	BCAS - Budget Cost Accounting System
		CPAIS - Corporate Property Asset Information System
		FFIS - Foundation Financial Information System
		FSDW
June	2	IPAC
		PCMS
July	2	FAADS - Federal Assistance Award Data System
		MINC - Miscellaneous Income
August	3	EMIS
		FDW
		FSDW
September	3	CONV - Central Accounting System (CAS) Conversion
		IPAC
		PCMS
October	1	EGTR - Energy/Travel Reporting Subsystem
November	2	CONV (MP01 only)
		FSDW
December	2	CPAIS
		FFIS

* IPAC includes OPAC Tracking and Reconciliation System (OTRS) and Government Online Accounting Link System (GOALS). Also, the TRVL, GVTs, and PRCH systems have no future releases due to the moratoriums placed on those systems pending their replacement.

CORPORATE SYSTEMS CHANGE REQUEST (CR)

INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED BY CONFIGURATION MANAGER (CM)					
1. CR#:		2. Date Request Logged:		3. CCB Review Date:	
4. CR Status: <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Closed			5. Date Status was revised:		
INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED BY ORIGINATOR					
6. Name		7. Phone No.:		8. Organization:	
9. Date Created:					
10. Associated CR#/Trouble Ticket#:	11. Category: <input type="checkbox"/> System Mod <input type="checkbox"/> Data Fix <input type="checkbox"/> Deviation <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	12. Priority: <input type="checkbox"/> Routine <input type="checkbox"/> Urgent <input type="checkbox"/> Mandated <input type="checkbox"/> EMERGENCY	13. Severity: <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Critical	14. Change Type: (IAS) <input type="checkbox"/> System Setup <input type="checkbox"/> COTS <input type="checkbox"/> Hardware <input type="checkbox"/> OS <input type="checkbox"/> Software <input type="checkbox"/> Document	
15. System:			16. Requested Implementation Date:		
17. Title:					
18. Description of Proposed Change:					
19. Benefit and/or Justification:					
20. Impact if Not Approved:					
INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED BY THE TECHNICAL LEAD					
21. Technical Lead:		22. Date:		23. Phone No.:	
24. Person Assigned:		25. Requirements Analyst:		26. System Version/Release:	
27. Impact Statement (Note any/all system downtime):					
28. Level of Effort/Time Estimate:			29. Projected Start Date:		30. Projected End Date:
31. Configurable Items (CIs) Affected:					
ENGINEERING REVIEW BOARD (ERB) RECOMMENDATION (Optional)					
32. Disposition: <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Conditionally Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn					
33. ERB or Technical Comments:					
34. Authorizing Signatures					
					Date:
					Date:
CONFIGURATION CONTROL BOARD (CCB) RECOMMENDATION					
35. Disposition: <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Conditionally Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved <input type="checkbox"/> Deferred <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn					
36. Target Release:	37. Release/Implementation Date:		38. Approved Priority: <input type="checkbox"/> Routine <input type="checkbox"/> Urgent <input type="checkbox"/> Mandated <input type="checkbox"/> EMERGENCY		
39. Comments:					
40. Authorizing Signature(s)					
Date:			Date:		
Date:			Date:		

Corporate Systems Change Request (CR) Instructions (Form AD1168)

A. Basic Form Instructions

If additional space is needed, it is appropriate to enter “See Attachment” and attach additional pages.

Blocks 1 - 5 are completed by the Configuration Manager (CM) ONLY.

1. **CR#:** This is the Unique Identification Number for each Change Request (CR). The CM Team maintains the database(s) (either manual or electronic) for assignment.
2. **Date Request Logged:** This is the date that the CM Team logs the CR into the CR database system. It is NOT the creation or origination date.
3. **CCB Review Date:** The relevant CM Team member enters the target date of the CCB meeting that will address this CR.
4. **CR Status:** The CM Team “Opens” the CR when it is logged into the system. It remains open until all actions required by the CR Life Cycle are completed.
5. **Date Status was revised:** The CM Team member enters the date on which the CR was opened and changes the date when the CR is closed. (Dates of Disposition (CCB or ERB) are recorded in the comments or signature blocks at the bottom of the form.)

Blocks 6 - 20 are initiated by **Originator**. Subsequent reviewers of the CR should add additional information as needed.

6. **Name:** Enter the full name of the originator.
7. **Phone Number:** Enter your telephone number (including area code).
8. **Organization:** Enter your Agency (NOT the Agency affected).
9. **Date:** Enter today’s date.
10. **Associated CR#/PR#/Trouble Ticket#:** If there is an associated Change Request, Problem Report, or Trouble Ticket, enter the appropriate number here. Otherwise enter “n/a.”
11. **Category:** Place an “X” on the appropriate blank.
 - a. **System Mod.** System modification includes all changes that affect system functionality or the way the system is built or operates. (See Section B.)
 - b. **Data Fix.** Data Fixes are changes modifying the business rules within the system that do not affect “how” the system operates and do not adversely affect other instances or systems. (See Section B.)
 - c. **Deviation.** A request to permit a noticeable deviation from the established process or standard.

AD1168 Instructions Con't

- d. **Waiver.** A request to permit a one-time delivery of a product or service that does not meet documented standards.

Blocks 12 and 13 together provide the CCB/ERB with a quick indicator of a problem's level of danger and time-sensitivity. The Priority block (block 12) indicates the originator's recommended speed of CR handling and how soon the change needs to be implemented. The Severity block (block 13) indicates the originator's assessment of the impact the problem or enhancement is likely to have on the system or system utility. EMERGENCY does not automatically indicate that a problem is critical; neither does Critical necessarily imply that emergency handling is needed. (For example, in 1990 the Y2K problem was recognized as critical, but it wasn't an emergency because there was 10 years to fix the problem. By mid-1999 the issue was considered an emergency.) The CCB/ERB will determine the final priority and severity in blocks at the bottom of the form.

12. **Priority:** Place an "X" on the appropriate blank to indicate the recommended speed of CR handling and how soon the change needs to be implemented.
 - a. **Routine.** Indicates that the change can be implemented when resources are available or with the next release (unless the release is very near in the future).
 - b. **Urgent.** Indicates that the problem can be tolerated for a short time, but should be corrected as soon as possible to prevent loss of system capability or user job-performance. (If a system shutdown is immediately imminent or users suddenly lose a needed capability, see EMERGENCY.)
 - c. **Mandated.** A CR that addresses a modification directed by or proposed to comply with orders, directives, or instructions from higher authority. (See Section B.)
 - d. **EMERGENCY.** Indicates the need to immediately correct an error that has caused or will cause a complete or severe loss of a high priority capability or system functionality, and no workaround is available. (Examples: 1) An application that shuts down the computer and causes an irrecoverable corruption of the database; 2) Sudden destruction/loss of a server hard drive.)
13. **Severity:** Place an "X" on the appropriate blank to indicate the degree of impact the problem or enhancement is likely to have on the system or system utility.
 - a. **Low.** Identifies an identified error that causes no serious operational problem or an identified system enhancement that would improve system utility.
 - b. **Medium.** Identifies an error that causes or can cause problems in operations or loss of server usability. A workaround or alternative is available (and the problem can be tolerated for a short time), but a permanent solution should be implemented; identifies an enhancement that would significantly improve system utility.

AD1168 Instructions Con't

- c. **High.** Indicates an error that causes or can cause a loss of service or loss of server usability to a large number of users or a mission-critical system; indicates an enhancement that would greatly prevent such losses or provide a major leap in system performance.
 - d. **Critical.** Indicates a problem that will or can crash the system or cause the complete loss of system capabilities.
14. **Change Type:** Place an X on the appropriate blank.
- a. **System Setup.** The CR addresses the standard configuration of a unit or set of similar units. For example, a standard user desktop configuration, arrangement of Instances and partitions, standard server setup, etc.)
 - b. **COTS (Commercial Off-the-Shelf).** The CR addresses software the development of which is not under the direct control of the system owner; provided by a vendor or outside agency.
 - c. **Hardware.** The CR addresses a hardware component(s) that comprise the system. Also may address the connectivity of the components.
 - d. **OS (Operating System).** The CR addresses the computer operating system (Examples: AIX, LINUX, OS390, Windows, etc.)
 - e. **Software.** The CR addresses software the development of which is under the direct control of the system owner; may apply directly to the software or to the software package (combination of source code, documentation, manuals, etc.).
 - f. **Document.** The CR addresses a specific document.
15. **System:** Enter the name or acronym for the system primarily addressed by the CR (e.g., IAS, PCMS, CPAIS, etc. Use the organizational name/acronym (FFIS, FNS, PSD, etc.) only if an organization asset other than directly system related is addressed.)
16. **System Version/Release:** Enter the appropriate version/release number.
17. **Title:** Enter a brief phrase or statement (less than one line if possible) that indicates the specific subject of the change. Try to make the title unique to prevent confusion between CRs. (See Section B for examples.) The Title may be changed by the CM Team or higher authority.
- Blocks 18, 19, and 20** are used to inform decision makers (CCB/ERB and system owners) of the requested change, why it should be implemented, and what is likely to happen if it is not implemented. The amount of information in each box is dependent upon the nature of the change.
18. **Description of Proposed Change:** Provide a detailed description of what would be changed about the system if the request is approved. If additional space is needed,

AD1168 Instructions Con't

enter "See attachment" and provide the description on pages following the form.
(See Section B)

19. **Benefit and/or Justification:** In terms of system/user capability or performance, state the advantages to be gained if this change is approved (enhancement), or which authority has directed the change (mandate), or how the change will solve the problem.
20. **Impact if Not Approved:** State the negative impact(s) on the system or on users if this change is not approved. As applicable, include what the system will continue to do and what the end result likely will be (if it can be determined).

Blocks 21 - 31 are completed by **Technical Lead**. After completed, please forward to the CM Team.

21. **Technical Lead:** The Technical Lead enters his/her name.
 22. **Date:** The Technical Lead enters the date he/she completes this section.
 23. **Phone Number:** Enter the Technical Lead's phone number. The Technical Lead will be the primary point of contact for all technical questions regarding this CR.
 24. **Person Assigned:** The Technical Lead enters the name of the person who is tasked with "developing" the change. If the Technical Lead will be doing this work, enter your own name.
 25. **Requirements Analyst:** The Technical Lead enters the name of a person who is to analyze the change and determine the technical requirements for its development and implementation.
- Note:** The Technical Lead, the Person Assigned, and the Requirements Analyst may be the same person or different people, but each role must be assigned.
26. **System Version/Release:** Enter the recommended version/release number of the affected system. Depending upon the priority of the change, this may be the current release or a forthcoming release. If the affected item is not part of the system, enter "N/A." The CCB/ERB will determine the required version/release in Block
 27. **Impact Statement:** Enter a detailed account of all operational impacts to the system when the change is installed and implemented, including such information as expected system downtimes (complete or partial), maintenance windows, expected temporary loss of capabilities, system slowdowns, etc.
 28. **Level of Effort/Time Estimate:** Enter estimates of resources, time, and materials required to complete change.
 29. **Start Date:** Enter the estimated/recommended date for beginning work on the change.
 30. **End Date:** Enter the estimated/recommended date by which this change can be completed and implemented.

AD1168 Instructions Con't

31. **Configurable Items Affected:** List all configurable items affected by the requested change. (See Section B.)

Blocks 32 - 34 are completed at/by the **ERB** (if applicable).

32. **Disposition:** Enter an "X" in the appropriate blank. If this is a recommendation to the CCB, this will be stated in Block 33. If other than approved, state the reason in Block 33.
33. **ERB or Technical Comments:** Enter comments in this field as necessary. State the reason(s) for any dispositions other than "Approved." All comments become a permanent part of the CR record. (See Section B.)
34. **Authorizing Signatures:** In the blanks immediately following, the ERB principals sign and date the decision.
- Blocks 35 - 40** are completed at/by the **CCB**.
35. **Disposition:** Enter an "X" in the appropriate blank. If other than "Approved," state the reason in Block 39.
36. **Target Release:** The CCB will decide which Version/Release this change should be implemented in and enter the appropriate information.
37. **Release/Implementation Date:** If the change is to be implemented in a forthcoming release, enter the scheduled date of that release. If change is for "immediate" implementation, enter the date by which implementation is to be completed.
38. **Approved Priority:** Enter an "X" in the correct blank. (The CCB will determine the actual Priority for the change.)
39. **Comments:** Enter comments in this field as necessary. State the reason(s) for any dispositions other than "Approved." All comments become a permanent part of the CR record. (See Section B.)
40. **Authorizing Signatures:** Four Blanks have been provided for the signatures that certify the CCB decision. Please be sure to date your signature.

AD1168 Instructions Con't

B. Detailed CR Form Instructions (See Section A for outline instructions.)

This section provides further details, guidance, and instructions for completing selected blocks of the CR form.

Block #	Notes
11.a	The “System Mod” category includes Enhancements, breakdowns (real-time or imminent), etc.
11.b	Unless otherwise directed by the system owner or higher authority, Data Fixes do not follow normal change management processes in that they require review and approval only by the system Owner (For example: Establishing user accounts on the system.)
12.c	A mandated CR will go through the same change management processes as any other CR; but the CCB or ERB may direct more expeditious handling if necessary to meet a mandated completion date.
17	<p>The following are some examples of titles:</p> <p>Not: “Database Improvement” – <i>not specific</i> But: “Added database field for subtotals”</p> <p>Not: “We need to set up the IMAP services for ORACLE workflow notifications in all AIX Servers (AIX 5L)” – <i>lengthy</i> But: “IMAP Services Setup for ORACLE workflow notifications”</p> <p>Not: “FAC 19 FAR Clause Install Correction” – <i>not specific; and source may issue other corrections, which will make CR identification more difficult</i> But: “Change ‘Effective Date’ in FAC 19 FAR Clause”</p>
18, 19, 20	The purpose of Blocks 18, 19, and 20 is to provide decision-makers with sufficient information to analyze the proposed change and arrive at an informed decision. If a user is the originator, this block might indicate what the result will be. Then it will be up to the appropriate member of the technical team to provide the required technology details in Block 26.
25	Information from this analysis may be used to update Blocks 18, 19, and 26 - 31.
31	The implementation of a change request on one part of a system may have a rippling affect through several other items. In order for all parts of the system to remain in concert, all affected items must be identified and addressed. For example, in some of the more complex systems, a request to modify a form on users’ desktops may require a change the form, the software that creates it, the software that handles the data, the user manual, the training program, an interface with another system, etc.
33	The ERB Secretariat will update the comments sections as necessary to provide a complete history of ERB actions and dispositions. The format should be: “Date (MM/DD/YY) – note(s)”. For example: 7/7/04 – Deferred until next meeting to obtain cost data.
39	See “33” above.